



## Lights out: Impact of the August 2003 power outage on mortality in New York, NY

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### Abstract:

**BACKGROUND:** Little is known about how power outages affect health. We investigated mortality effects of the largest US blackout to date, 14-15 August 2003 in New York, NY. **METHODS:** We estimated mortality risk in New York, NY, using a generalized linear model with data from 1987-2005. We incorporated possible confounders, including weather and long-term and seasonal mortality trends. **RESULTS:** During the blackout, mortality increased for accidental deaths (122% [95% confidence interval Euro Surveillance (Bulletin European Sur Les Maladies Transmissibles; European Communicable Disease Bulletin) 28%-287%]) and nonaccidental (ie, disease-related) deaths (25% [12%-41%]), resulting in approximately 90 excess deaths. Increased mortality was not from deaths being advanced by a few days; rather, mortality risk remained slightly elevated through August 2003. **CONCLUSIONS:** To our knowledge, this is the first analysis of power outages and nonaccidental mortality. Understanding the impact of power outages on human health is relevant, given that increased energy demand and climate change are likely to put added strain on power grids.

**Source:** <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3276729>

### Resource Description

#### Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Unspecified Exposure

#### Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

Urban

#### Geographic Location:

resource focuses on specific location

United States

#### Health Impact:

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

# Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

Injury, Morbidity/Mortality

**Population of Concern:** A focus of content

**Population of Concern:** ☒

populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Elderly

**Resource Type:** ☒

format or standard characteristic of resource

Research Article

**Timescale:** ☒

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified

**Vulnerability/Impact Assessment:** ☒

resource focus on process of identifying, quantifying, and prioritizing vulnerabilities in a system

A focus of content